DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 160 EA 022 918

AUTHOR Toews, Jim; Barker, Diane Murray
TITLE The Baz Attack: A School Improvement Experience Utilizing Effective Schools Research, 1981-1985.
INSTITUTION Calgary Board of Education (Alberta).
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 36p.; Photographs will reproduce poorly.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Change Strategies; Committees; Educational Environment; *Educational Improvement; Foreign Countries; Junior High Schools; Needs Assessment; Participative Decision Making; Program Design; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; School Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS Alberta; *Effective Schools Project

ABSTRACT

After describing the programs and staff at Ian Bazalgette Junior High School in Calgary, Canada, this document reviews the problems at the school in 1979 that led to the implementation of the Effective Schools Program. A review of literature related to effective schools precedes an explanation of seven school effectiveness factors adopted by the Process Team at Bazalgette. Development of a goal-oriented decision-making process designed to implement the Effective Schools Program is explored with emphasis on changing attitudes of teachers, the key role of the principal, and the development of a Faculty Council, Internal Monitoring Committee, and working committees that focused on the effectiveness factors. Next, the External Monitoring Committee and the evaluation process it used during the program's first year are described as well as the program outcomes identified by the committee, suggestions offered, and reasons given by the principal for the program's success. Separate descriptions of the second, third, and fourth years of the program emphasize the actions of effectiveness factor committees organized each fall and the observations of the monitoring committees. A final section summarizes changes brought about by the program. Appended is a list of staff members involved. (9 references) (CLA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED331160

THE · BAZ Attack

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Calgary Board of Education

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. Winnitoy

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

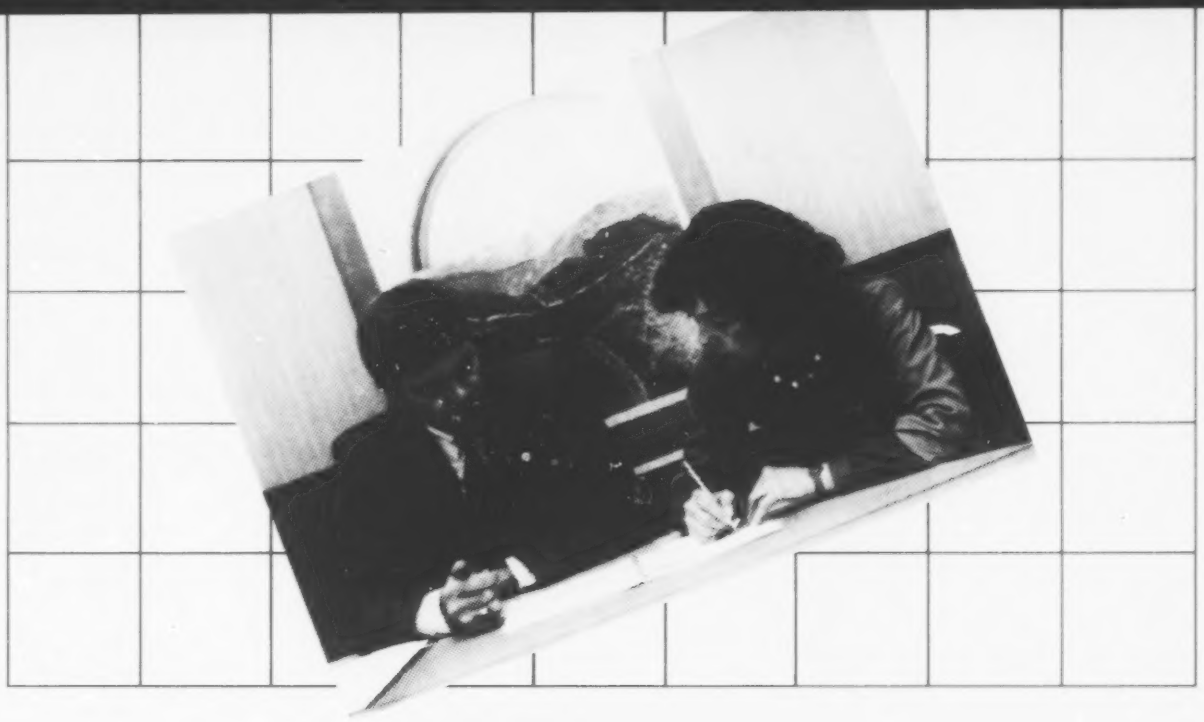
A School Improvement Experience Utilizing Effective Schools Research 1981 - 1985

JIM TOEWS • DIANE MURRAY BARKER

Ian Bazalgette Junior High School, Calgary, Alberta, Canada • 1985

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA 022 918



Jim Toews has been the principal of Ian Bazalgette Junior High School since September 1979. Diane Murray Barker has been a teacher there since October 1980.

Dedication

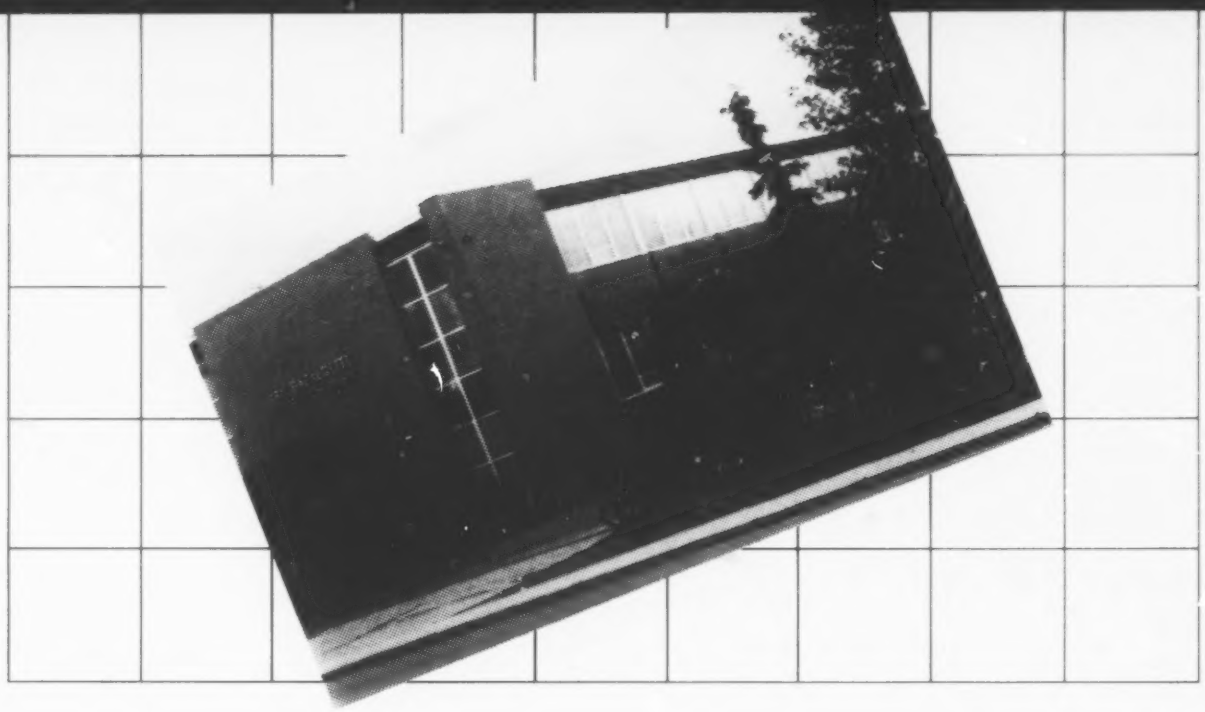
This short history of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette Junior High School is dedicated to all those who participated in this exciting experience and to all those who did, and will, benefit from its success - the Baz staff, the students, and the parents of those students - past, present, and future.

Acknowledgements

In addition to the staff of Ian Bazalgette Junior High School, the students, and their parents, a number of other educators require acknowledgement for their contribution to this project and to the Effective Schools Program. Peter Waldron, Director, Learning Process Group, Beverly Priftis, Supervisor, Process Team, and other members of the Process Team, Division of Instructional Services, Calgary Board of Education, must be recognized for introducing the research which provided the basis of the project and maintaining support for the network of schools involved in Effective Schools projects. Gordon Elhard, Associate Superintendent, East Area, provided constant advice and support which have been maintained by his successor, Gordon Plaxton. We thank Peter Mortimore, Director of Research and Statistics, Inner London Education Authority, London, England for his advice and consultation during his 1983 visit to Alberta. To all those who believe that schools do make a difference, we are grateful. We also wish to express our thanks to those outside readers whose knowledge and expertise provided excellent suggestions for the revision of this manuscript. Finally, we acknowledge the constant encouragement and assistance of the editor's editor, Allan McLennan, Supervisor of Program Evaluation, Calgary Board of Education.

CONTENTS

Introduction		Page 7
Chapter 1	**The Challenge**	Page 9
Chapter 2	**The Research**	Page 13
Chapter 3	**Research Into Action: Year One**	Page 17
Chapter 4	**Monitoring The Program**	Page 23
Chapter 5	**Year Two**	Page 27
Chapter 6	**Year Three**	Page 31
Chapter 7	**Year Four**	Page 35
Chapter 8	**The Results**	Page 37
Bibliography		Page 41
Staff List 1981-1985		Page 42



Introduction

Ian Bazalgette Junior High School (often referred to as Baz) is a junior high in Area IV (pre-June 1984, East Area) of the Calgary Board of Education. The student population, which is relatively evenly divided among Grades 7, 8, and 9, has declined from 630 in 1979-80 to 540 in 1984-85 as a result of the overall decline in Calgary's student population. In addition to a core program of Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Physical Education, the school offers a broad choice of options to students. These options comprise one-third of a student's program. Most options including Art, Computers, Drama, Industrial Arts, Home Economics, Music, and Photography are taught by specialist teachers. Core subjects are also taught by subject area specialists. The total teaching staff has ranged from 40 to 35 between 1979 and 1985. The administration team includes a principal, an assistant principal, and a vice-principal. A professional staff of two guidance counsellors, a librarian, an English-as-a-Second Language teacher, and several resource teachers form a Special Services group within the school. Since many of the school's students have been identified as having special learning needs (particularly in the area of language development), this Special Services group is assigned to the school to assist in meeting these needs. A head secretary and another permanent secretary are assisted by two part-time office aides. The library clerk and an aide also assist students. A lunch room aide manages a concession which serves hot and cold lunches. The school has five caretakers who work in shifts.

7

CHAPTER 1

The Challenge

Whenever the administration in a school changes, one of the first tasks of the new team is to analyze the *status quo*. The perception which one administration has of a school is not necessarily that of another. Equally true is the fact that any principal has no simple task when attempting to create an ideal school. Since educators have different and sometimes divergent personal and professional goals, each administration sees its school as a unique challenge.

When Ian Bazalgette Junior High School was assigned a new principal and experienced a 50% staff turnover in 1979, the school was in an ideal situation to reassess where it was and where it was going. The first year for the administration and the teaching staff was essentially a time of frustration and survival. The staff looked upon the new principal and the new assistant principal as a "pair of nice guys." An experienced teacher on the staff remembers thinking to himself, "I am going to lock my room and let these nice people with nice ideas get destroyed." The Baz veterans assumed that these administrators had no comprehension of the survival techniques required at Ian Bazalgette. Student attendance was poor, vandalism costs were high, the rates of teacher absence and turnover were high, conflicts among students were frequent, and academic achievement was low. Baz had the reputation of being one of the toughest schools in Calgary for teachers. Reminiscing about his early experience at Ian Bazalgette, a Science teacher said:

> *I was devastated after the first while. You couldn't leave your room unlocked. If you did, you personally had to guard all the equipment. The students would come with their compasses, go up to the intercom speakers, and punch through every little hole.*

The factor of physical violence was always present in the school. The teachers taught their classes with the doors closed and locked. A Language Arts teacher described the students as "really physical in settling their problems." Fights often broke out in classrooms or were arranged for after school, when larger crowds provided cheering sections for these rituals. Again, from the memory of a teacher not given to exaggeration:

> *I couldn't believe how often I'd look out the window just a few minutes after school, and see large crowds gathered around a couple of girls who were ripping out each other's hair and*

scratching each other. Oh, I just couldn't believe it! It was a real eye-opener to me.

Another teacher summed up the situation quite succinctly:

I don't know how we ever survived. You were really shocked in the beginning, but later these kinds of experiences became everyday occurrences. . . .

Student attendance was a major problem. The list of students away on any given day often covered both sides of a typed sheet. This caused serious problems, both for teaching and testing, as one teacher soon discovered:

For the Grade 9's you would expect four or five kids absent in many of the classes. This seemed to be an accepted number . . . and test time was a damned frustrating experience because these kids wouldn't have been in on the lessons. Maybe if they were there for the lesson, they wouldn't come for the test. Afterwards you would catch them, and they just had no ambition to write the tests. But when it came to mark time, they would suddenly remember the test you had given weeks ago and demand to write it.

Teachers rarely assigned homework, since they did not expect it to be done. The situation was described as "really disillusioning for those who thought they could come in and just teach." One teacher compared the Baz experience to her work in other schools:

What took me a day or two in another school, would take the entire week here, because the students weren't very receptive. Many of their language skills were so low that you had to teach basics before you could get into any ideas. . . . With the exception of a few students, most did not care about achieving . . . . You had to spend 90% of your time policing, maintaining crowd control, sympathizing, or being mad before you could teach. I often said that 5% of my class time was teaching time. . . . I think that the real reason I was hired was because I was the only substitute they had who kept the students inside the classroom.

Another teacher echoed these sentiments from a different point-of-view:

I had always taught in schools where marks really meant something. I couldn't understand kids who really didn't care; marks just didn't mean a thing . . . . That really annoyed me. I went down from what I thought was Grade 8 level Language Arts to Grade 3, and I thought, "That's it, I'll go no lower."

Success and academic achievement in school were not highly regarded by the majority of the students. In many cases the relationship between the parents and the school was poor. For example, in 1979-80 the staff outnumbered the parents at the annual Meet the Teacher night. Parents of many of the students had not had good personal relationships with public education and had little respect for schools. They would often become belligerent towards a teacher or administrator who telephoned to discuss attendance or poor student behaviour. In many homes the single parent was working and was not at home to monitor whether a child went to school or stayed home.

During some "in retrospect" discussions recorded in the winter of 1984-85, numerous teachers admitted that they were embarrassed to tell colleagues that they worked at Ian Bazalgette. At conferences and workshops, colleagues treated them with a certain sympathy, but seemed to wonder what they had done, or not done, that caused them to be assigned there. Teachers had little pride in the school, other than the awareness of their ability to survive in the difficult situation. Most substitute teachers found life much more difficult at Ian Bazalgette than at other schools in the system, and some admitted to refusing an assignment at Baz.

In 1979, in an attempt to reassess the direction of the school, the new administrative team involved the staff in an analysis of the school's strengths and the areas wherein they felt improvement was needed. The identified strengths included:

1. A core of dedicated staff
2. A successful option program
3. A flexible timetable that allowed for individual differences
4. A homeroom system which allowed for a three-year bonding between the student and the homeroom teacher

At the end of its first year, the administrative team realized that in order to survive it had been operating the school on a crisis basis. To move away from this reactive management style into a more proactive situation became a goal for the second year. The team believed that some way had to be found to take advantage of the school's strengths to bring improvement.

At a brainstorming session in the fall of 1980, the staff identified areas wherein improvement was

needed. Of the 71 items suggested, the teachers ranked their top priorities. These included:

1. Shorter class periods
2. Introduction of Family Life and Sex Education classes
3. Elimination of the daily 20-minute reading period
4. A stricter approach to discipline
5. Smaller class sizes
6. A more equal distribution of more and less able students

In retrospect, a closer analysis of the complete 1980 list revealed a significant conflict within the staff. For example, elimination of the 20-minute reading period received 19 votes; retaining the reading period received 17 votes. Continuing with homogeneously grouped classes, with lower numbers in the bottom stream, received 10 votes; the concept of equalized class sizes with heterogeneously distributed students received 14. Obviously, a dichotomy existed among the staff within the school on many issues.

In an attempt to unify the staff perception of a healthy junior high school, a non-teaching Professional Development Day in the winter of 1980 was dedicated to generating a school philosophy based on staff concensus. At this meeting the staff was successful in distilling the 27-page school philosophy booklet, which had been written in 1975, into a new five-page booklet of "we believe" statements. All this time, effort, and energy did not appear to bring about any discernable change in the quality of life in the school. Although the staff enjoyed the day with no classes, the new five-page philosophy booklet was filed in an obscure corner. The school continued for the most part to operate as it had previously. Crisis management remained the order of the day. Attendance showed some improvement because of regular administrative phone calls to the homes of all absent students. However, student behaviour continued to result in numerous suspensions and expulsions, achievement remained low, and vandalism costs were high. In the spring of 1981, teacher transfers dropped from 50% to 35% - this was still too high for maintaining a stable educational environment. Obviously, more than a new administration and a well-intentioned professional staff were required to achieve the change which would lead to improved learning at Ian Bazalgette.

In the spring of 1980, the principal of Ian Bazalgette and two other principals from the same area of the city discussed common concerns about their schools with the then East Area Associate Superintendent. They outlined problems relating to inconsistent achievement, discipline, student lethargy, absenteeism, vandalism, low student self-concept, and a high staff turnover. A detailed discussion of these problems illustrated the need for some innovative plan to address the situation.

The concensus among the three principals and their superintendent was that external assistance was required. Within the Calgary Board of Education's Division of Instructional Services are numerous departments whose role is to initiate, coordinate, and support activities in individual schools. One of these departments is the Process Team (Special Projects Team prior to September 1983). After several meetings in May and June of 1980, the program specialist from this team introduced the concept of Effective Schools drawn from a variety of sources on both sides of the Atlantic. This literature provided a strong argument in favour of the thesis that schools can make a difference. It refuted the theories of the highly publicized Coleman Report (1966) which had caused many educators to believe that socio-economic and familial influences could not be counterbalanced by the school.

CHAPTER 2

The Research

The primary source for what eventually emerged as the Effective Schools Program in Calgary is the eight-year British longitudinal study of twelve inner London schools by Michael Rutter, *et al*, **15,000 Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children (1979).** American effective schools research has also been consulted. A conclusion common to these researchers is the concept that the individual school is the unit of change. Moreover, significant change will only occur through a holistic approach to education. As John Goodlad (1983) pointed out, critics of education are inclined to centre on schools, but the responses have traditionally centred on parts of the educational system, teachers, resources, or curriculum.

The Effective Schools literature has also broken away from the traditional approach by describing the school as a unique social institution with its own culture. When change is required within that culture, it must be directed by the people who create that culture. Hence, any school which attempts to use the approach of the Calgary Effective Schools Program must decide for itself which aspects of its unique culture require changing. This demands a concensus of opinion on the areas wherein change is required followed by a plan to change attitudes, behaviour, and relationships. To succeed in this task, the school must be operating with a clearly developed philosophy and well-articulated goals.

A major contribution of the British and American research on effective schools is the identification of factors which appear to be present in schools deemed to be effective. **15,000 Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children** concluded that schools vary markedly with respect to pupils' behaviour, attendance, exam success, and delinquency. These variations were systematically and strongly associated with certain characteristics of the schools as social institutions. From Rutter's study, eight factors in which differences existed between the more effective and the least effective schools were identified:

1. The use of rewards and praise
2. Appearance and comfort of the school environment
3. Student participation in the operation of the school
4. Emphasis on academic achievement
5. Teachers as models of behaviour
6. School organization and teacher skills in group management

7. Firm leadership by the principal and teacher involvement in decision making
8. Balance of intellectually able and less able students

The eighth factor seems to be the only one which is outside the school's control.

Ronald Edmonds' presentation, **Characteristics of Schools That Are Instructionally Effective for All Pupils**, (1981) also identified similar factors and went so far as to conclude that it is possible to predict the effectiveness of a school from these characteristics. None of the research has found that one factor is more important, or less important, than any other. The interrelationships of these factors as developed by a school staff can create what Rutter calls a "positive ethos," which should then impact upon the outcomes of student achievement and behaviour.

The research already cited and other current research was consolidated by Process Team members under seven factors which could be manipulated by a school. Some explanation of what these seven factors mean is essential to understanding the process of the Ian Bazalgette Effective Schools Program.

1. **Rewards and Praise**

   Formal prizes do not relate to higher achievement, but they do provide a public demonstration that the school values achievement. The important factor in formal prize-giving is the proportion of pupils who perceive that they have an opportunity to receive a prize or some other form of recognition. Encouragement and praise only work when those giving the rewards are perceived as significant others in the lives of their students.

2. **Emphasis on Learning**

   Higher achieving schools spend a large proportion of class time on instruction which includes a higher rate of immediate feedback to students concerning their progress. Schools with high achievement are likely to use more teaching games in which groups of students compete as teams rather than as individuals. Schools which provide a high proportion of children with out-of-school learning experiences have better academic success.

   At all levels, the instruction which students receive must be designed to employ all the methods which people use to learn. Students also show better academic success in schools where homework is regularly given and marked. Achievement data on student progress must be regularly used diagnostically to change and improve the curriculum content and/or the teaching strategies.

   In lower achieving schools, a disproportionate number of students are placed in slow or remedial groups where low academic expectations prevail. Conversely, schools which are successfully teaching lower ability pupils do not separate them according to ability.

3. **Level of Expectations that Teacher Behaviour Represents**

   Specific actions of teachers, as well as the general attitudes prevailing within the school, indicate expectations. Teaching performance is a function of the school environment as well as personal qualities. Pupils are influenced by the way the staff members interact with one another and by how they are perceived to view the school. Children have a strong tendency to copy the behaviour of authority figures, especially those whom they like and respect. Therefore, teachers in more effective schools perceive themselves as models; through specific behaviours they demonstrate their expectations.

4. **Student Participation**

   Schools which expect students to care for their own resources have better behaviour, better attendance, and less delinquency. Giving students posts or tasks of responsibility is associated with better pupil behaviour. There are likely to be benefits in ensuring that a higher proportion of pupils have the opportunity to hold some kind of post of responsibility. As students are able to take responsible roles and achieve satisfaction from them, they are more likely to identify with educational objectives. Students are active representatives on policy making councils of the successful school.

5. **Appearance and Comfort of the School Environment**

   There is a positive relationship between an attractive school and educational success. Behaviour and academic attainment tend to be better when the school is clean and tidy with attractive pictures and plants. Schools

which display student work in classrooms and halls have better academic outcomes. There is an inverse relationship between the amount of student work and other materials displayed and the amount of graffiti observed in the building.

6. School Organization and Teacher Skills

The overall ethos of the school provides support and a context which facilitate good teaching. Pupils are kept actively engaged in productive activities. Teachers in higher achieving schools exhibit more concern for, and commitment to, their students' achievement and express this concern through interaction with their students. Effective teachers hold high expectations for their students. Teachers spend the first few days of school in September clarifying rules, consequences, and procedures.

7. Firm Leadership and Teacher Involvement in Decision Making

The principal pays consistent attention to the teaching and learning in the school. High expectations on the part of the principal are a critical leadership factor. Teachers and school administrators agree that the combined effect of the school is much more powerful than the individual teacher effect on student academic achievement. Group planning provides opportunities for teachers to encourage and support one another. In effective schools, planning is a group matter. The greater the group agreement on crucial issues, the greater the tolerance which is possible for individuality on other matters.

In discussing these characteristics, Edmonds (1981) has noted:

The characteristics that describe effective schools are practical, obtainable, and if we are serious enough and systematic and thoughtful enough, can come to describe all of the schools that we work in.

From its study of the effective schools literature, the Process Team realized that the relationship between school philosophy, school goals, and classroom activities is often difficult, if not impossible, to identify. Ambiguous statements are of little help to the teacher when planning lessons. Some structure must be in place to provide for the translation of philosophy and beliefs into consistent, effective approaches to teaching and learning. Schools need tools to enable them to take control and shape their culture. The team believed that by using the seven identified factors as an umbrella under which to organize everything they do, schools can develop consistent approaches which will lead to a more positive ethos and improved student behaviours and learning. Process Team members, therefore, began to organize the theoretical base for practical implementation. They consolidated the research and offered it as a model to assist staffs interested in this approach to school improvement.

CHAPTER 3

Research into Action: Year One

On September 18, 1981, the Ian Bazalgette staff was the first to participate in a full-day workshop on the effective schools concept. The morning session began with an overview of the research with particular emphasis being placed on the seven effectiveness factors. The staff members were then asked to rank the factors in terms of their importance to the situation as perceived at Ian Bazalgette. After some discussion of the results of the analysis, the principal suggested that for the remainder of this day the staff members examine their school on the basis of the four factors they had ranked as most relevant. These were:

1. Appearance and Comfort
2. School Organization and Teacher Skills in Group Management
3. Instructional Emphasis
4. Rewards and Praise

To begin the actual work of turning the research into something meaningful for the school, four committees were formed, each to focus on one of these four effectiveness factors. Teachers were asked to join a committee of interest to him or her. The suggestion was made, however, that the membership of each committee represent a cross-section of the professional staff. Hence, teachers in the same subject area worked on different committees.

During the afternoon of the workshop, each group reviewed what it thought the school was already accomplishing in relation to its specific factor. The group then brainstormed ideas which would serve to supplement the activities deemed successful. Next the group members categorized the brainstormed items and attempted to reach a concensus on items which required immediate action. A group reporter shared the results of each committee's discussions.

In a summary of the day, the specialist from the Process Team suggested that the staff consider the potential of engaging in an Effective Schools Program and the possible implications of such a decision. She gave the staff the option of becoming involved in an ongoing process. The alternative was to consider the day a one-shot information-sharing session, as was common practice with many professional development days at that time.

At this point, many teachers were not convinced that the idea of an Effective Schools Project had a

great deal of merit. A number of teachers believed that most of the effective schools factors identified in the research were already receiving adequate attention at Ian Bazalgette. They could not conceive that the extra effort and energy required would have payoff in the classroom. One experienced teacher remembers thinking:

> *"Oh God, not again. This is the fourth time in this school that I've listened to this sort of thing. I'm getting sick of it!" Another experienced teacher and I talked about it. We thought "Do we have to go through this again? Can't we sit it out and come in at the end?" We felt that we were being recycled.*

A meeting of the staff's Professional Development Committee revealed the teachers' concerns. Rejection of the project was debated. The principal, however, was convinced that the program had merit; in fact, he believed that it was exactly what the school needed to consolidate and expand upon the gains that had been made during previous years. In order to convince the majority and make this a school rather than administrative decision, he sought the support of the administrative team and other formal and informal leaders. Through the use of a decision-making process which was emerging at Ian Bazalgette, the principal asserted his leadership role to initiate a change process which he hoped and believed would benefit the entire school.

At the core of the success of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette is the principal's long-held belief in participatory decision-making. The effective schools research indicates that firm leadership and staff involvement in decision-making are necessary factors in an effective school. Effective leadership is not, and should never be, a one-person operation. Well-rounded leadership requires the coordinated efforts of a team of individuals.

This concept had been recognized at Ian Bazalgette before the Effective Schools Program was introduced. This recognition led to a concerted effort on the part of the principal to build such a team. The first step was to concentrate on the administrative team which includes the principal, the assistant principal, and the vice principal. Essential to this process was the requirement that the principal transfer to the team more responsibility in the decision-making process. The principal at Ian Bazalgette would be the first to admit that it is not easy for a principal to transfer some of this leadership responsibility to others. Some time-honoured power must be relinquished in the process. The principal is the one who will shoulder the blame if problems arise and errors occur. He must also take into account his own ego, and recognize the possibility that others can make decisions superior to those he might make on his own. However, this principal remained committed to the concept of shared decision-making.

Over a period of time, the members of the administrative team began to make decisions on a consultative basis. They also took the time and energy required to ascertain whether each decision corresponded to the goals of the school. As the assistant principal and the vice principal began to exercise their increased responsibilities, the school staff realized that the school was functioning with a team of three principals rather than with one. For example, disciplinary problems could be tackled immediately because each principal exercised equal authority in that area.

The next step was to expand this decision-making model to more individuals in the school. This resulted in the creation of a Faculty Council which consisted of the administrative team, the head secretary, the librarian, the coordinators of each subject area, and a coordinator of the special services group. In addition to serving as a communication link between the administration and the teaching staff, the Faculty Council members became involved in the decision-making process in matters affecting the school as a whole. In conjunction with the administative team, these individuals learned to practise a participatory decision-making model which was always required to focus on the stated goals of the school.

Throughout the years 1979-81, Ian Bazalgette was making attempts to change through this goal-oriented decision-making process. As previously stated, administrative decisions had resulted in some improvements in student attendance and in student discipline. However, the teaching staff viewed these changes as resulting from administrative priorities for which the teachers had little ownership. Unlike many staff members, the principal immediately realized that the Effective Schools concept offered an opportunity for the transfer of the change process from the administration to the entire teaching staff. His problem was to convince the staff members that they could, and would, participate in the decisions which would emanate from their involvement in plotting future directions for the school.

Following a heated debate regarding the perceived merits and demerits of becoming involved in a whole school program, the Professional Development Committee voted to recommend that the

school spend another half Professional Day discussing how this could be accomplished. During this session in early November 1981, both the principal and the Process Team specialist spoke to the entire staff about the potential of the process. The staff was assured of support from the Process Team; this included $2,000 in seed money and the promise of personal assistance from team members. The principal encouraged the staff to become involved in a total school project, and made no effort to hide his own enthusiasm for the plan. In addition, he requested that those who continued to oppose the plan resist the temptation to block the process. He bluntly announced that should the staff decide to become involved in creating an Effective School Plan, non-participation was perfectly acceptable, but blocking would not be tolerated. In the end, everyone appeared to join a group, although several senior staff members remained reluctant. As one teacher who subsequently became very active in the program explained:

In our group some people didn't do anything the whole year. They would come to meetings but not do anything. We just said "Ok, that's your right if you don't want to participate at this time."

With this review and reassurance of support, the staff decided that the project had merit and was worth pursuing. One teacher recalls the change in attitude:

After the first meeting, I thought "Oh, no, not again. I'm not doing this because we've done this over and over again." I remember the second meeting when I realized there was going to be follow-up. I remember thinking to myself, "This is going to be different." I remember changing my mind about participating.

The most difficult hurdle had been surpassed. If the staff had continued only grudgingly with the program, little growth would probably have resulted. At the heart of this program lies the prerequisite for a strong commitment from all those involved.

After this decision, the staff took another look at the priority rankings for the seven effectiveness factors. Despite varying interpretations of the meanings of the rankings, the final decision was to continue with the four working committees, Rewards and Praise, Appearance and Comfort, Instructional Emphasis, and School Organization. Teaching staff were given another opportunity to change groups or to refrain from joining any factor group. These re-established factor group committees then took a second look at the brainstormed lists of ideas, added any items which had come to mind since the original professional day, and established priorities for immediate attention. Each priority was then written as an action statement which included: WHAT was to be done, WHO was responsible for seeing that it was done, and WHEN it was to be accomplished.

Within a few weeks, four working committees were meeting. Teacher chairpersons were chosen by each group; to them fell the difficult task of fitting committee meetings into already busy schedules. Since staff members had chosen the area of greatest personal interest, no two committees were the same size. Rewards and Praise had only six members;

Appearance and Comfort, twelve. Despite the variation in human resource potential, the efforts of each group soon became apparent throughout the school.

The School Organization and Teacher Skills Committee used a staff questionnaire to identify the problems of student behaviour requiring action by the entire school. The problem areas identified were students wearing outer wear to class, carrying food outside the lunch area, returning to lockers between classes, and arriving late for classes. The committee suggested that staff and students discuss these concerns to establish common expectations and standards. It soon became obvious that students found it easier to meet expectations which they understood and which were consistently applied throughout the school - in classrooms, halls, the lunchroom, and the office.

The Rewards and Praise Committee reviewed recent research into the effective use of positive reinforcement in the classroom. After discussing this information, the entire staff decided to concentrate on expanding the opportunities for students to achieve recognition. In addition to the year-end awards ceremony for the entire school, awards ceremonies were organized for each grade at the end of each reporting period. These formal awards presentations were augmented by numerous informal rewards. These included pats on the back, warm fuzzies (small hand-made pompoms with positive messages attached), scratch and sniff stickers, a kind word or compliment, and others too numerous to mention. This approach encouraged teachers to concentrate on giving rewards and praise individually, personally, and generously. Even the most apathetic student could hope for recognition at any sign of growth.

Simultaneously, the school building took on a new look under the direction of the Appearance and Comfort Committee. Students painted the dull institutional foyer and halls in vibrant shades, using the practical rationale of providing artistically designed directional arrows to the different areas of the school. Plants sprang up in classrooms, halls, and the office. Murals were painted on the walls of the gym and the hallways. The students were actively involved in creating this new look, and they viewed the results with great pride. As the students began to develop a strong sense of ownership for their school, vandalism decreased at a remarkable rate.

Concurrently, suggestions came from the Emphasis on Learning Committee to re-examine curriculum content and student evaluation procedures. It also suggested an increase in the use of field trips to reinforce classroom instruction. The committee prepared an Action Manual to facilitate communication among the various departments within the school. Its work aimed to promote a more consistent approach among subject areas.

To aid this process of greater consistency, the School Organization and Teacher Skills Committee provided opportunities for teachers to observe each other's lessons. Successful instructional and classroom management strategies were shared on an individual, team,and all school basis. The expertise of individual staff members became recognized throughout the school. As one teacher later explained, "Professional awareness is way up. Everyone is willing to open up and ask for advice from other professionals."

To ensure whole school support for each group's activities, the action statements were brought to staff meetings by the factor committee chairpersons. There they were discussed, amended, and voted upon. The Ian Bazalgette staff approved its first Effective Schools action plan on November 17, 1981. Whenever action statements were accepted by the staff, they were added to a huge Effective Schools Program display board in the staff room. The purpose of this display board was to communicate the progress of individual factor groups to the entire staff and to provide a visible, and continuing, reminder of the project's activities and accomplishments. This display board was only one of several methods whereby in-school communication improved through the Effective Schools approach. The fact that membership in factor groups was based on personal interest meant that staff members were not working within the traditional subject area teams. This promoted new friendships and a greater understanding of how each person's strengths contributed to the school as a whole.

Another important element in the Effective Schools process has been the Internal Monitoring Committee which is composed of the factor group chairpersons, the principal, and a member of central office Process Team. This group met regularly in a variety of locations which included stand-up meetings in the principal's office or more formal sit-down sessions in the conference room. This self-evaluation element appears to be critical to the management of a successful Effective Schools Program. The meetings served to update all groups on the status of the actions taken by the other groups. Each chairperson had the opportunity to share problems, discuss concerns, and request suggestions for alternate strategies to overcome roadblocks. These

meetings were used to make decisions on sharing the specially allocated seed money provided by the Process Team. They also gave the principal an opportunity to reconfirm his personal support through commending each group on its accomplishments.

The Internal Monitoring Committee meetings also provided a certain accountability and gave the principal an opportunity to motivate and coordinate the factor groups. A flurry of activity would follow the announcement of an impending meeting. Each factor group would meet to plan future activities and document accomplishments since the last meeting. The meetings also served to keep the project moving forward as a whole. They prevented the segmentation which often occurs in enterprises undertaken by secondary school staffs. Through their participation in these meetings and the experience of chairing their factor group meetings, the chairpersons of the factor groups became a part of the participatory decision-making process which was gradually transferring the ownership of whole school decisions from the administration to the staff.

CHAPTER 4

Monitoring the Program

In addition to the ongoing efforts of the Internal Monitoring Committee, the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette has undergone an annual evaluation by an External Monitoring Committee. This dimension was included in the Effective Schools process for the following reasons:

1. To provide the school with an objective perspective generated by personnel external to the school
2. To provide opportunties for individuals outside the school to learn about Ian Bazalgette's change process through direct observation and involvement
3. To provide opportunities for positive feedback and recognition of staff efforts
4. To make impartial suggestions for future action

Since the entire Effective Schools Program is built upon decisions made by the school's staff, the choice of the membership of the External Monitoring Committee is made by the school. In 1981-82 the staff generated a list of 15 potential members from whom it chose three or four for the principal to contact. Possible committee members included parents, the Area Superintendent, members of the Board of Trustees, the Chief Superintendent of Schools, the Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Services, and the Supervisor of the Program Evaluation Department. In 1981-82 the External Monitoring Committee members were the Associate Superintendent, East Area, the Acting Associate Superintendent, Program Development, and the Supervisor of Program Evaluation. Subsequently, each year's committee has included the Area Superintendent who acted as chairperson, and the school system's Supervisor of Program Evaluation who acted as secretary and prepared the written report. The Chief Superintendent served on one committee; a different trustee volunteered for each of years two and three; a parent was included in years two and three.

After the committee's membership had been finalized, the principal, acting on behalf of the Internal Monitoring Committee, outlined a number of specific areas or questions for the External Monitoring Committee to address in the course of its activities. The principal detailed these concerns in a letter to the committee's chairperson. Examples of questions for the first three years include:

1. What progress have we made in the factors

which were the focus for 1981-82? (Year One)
2. Comment on our success in addressing all seven Effective Schools Program research factors as compared to only four factors addressed last year. (Year Two)
3. Are we making headway in our partnership approach to education involving parents, staff, and students working together holistically? (Year Three)
4. To what degree is the total staff committed to our Effective Schools Program? (Year Three)
5. Give us some feedback on the effects of our school becoming "fishbowled" because of this program. (Years Two and Three)

The school principal and the chairperson of the committee negotiated a suitable date, usually in May, for the committee's full-day, on-site evaluation activities. In preparation for this assessment, the school submitted to the committee a variety of documents. These usually included a statement of school philosophy, school priorities, staff lists, timetables, statistics on attendance and vandalism, standardized test scores, school handbooks, descriptions of the activities of the Effective Schools Program working committees, the Internal Monitoring Committee's annual report, and anecdotal information from staff and students on Effective Schools Program activities and effects.

Prior to spending its full day in the school, the External Monitoring Committee usually held two half-day planning meetings. The first was used to review the documents submitted by the school, and to discuss the *modus operandi* for the on-site activity. The second was a meeting with the principal to discuss and clarify the intentions of the Effective Schools Program and to clarify his expectations of the committee. During this meeting the committee also worked out the exact details of the on-site day includng the timetable, the list of groups to be interviewed, and the choice of a room where the committee could work.

On the day designated for the on-site evaluation, the committee began work at 7:00 a.m. and continued until 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. The day began with an off-site breakfast meeting with the school's administrative team, followed by a pre-school meeting with the Faculty Council. A separate, and often lengthy, meeting with the Internal Monitoring Committee provided the opportunity for the External Monitoring Committee members to question the factor group chairpersons on the year's activities. Meetings with the support staff, the Parents Advisory Committee, and members of the Student Council were valuable in assessing perceptions of the changes occurring in the school. The members of the External Monitoring Committee visited classrooms to observe and interview individual teachers and students. Informal discussions and observations during the students' lunch period, noontime activities, and after school activities served to round out the picture.

At the conclusion of this process, the committee met to review and summarize its findings. Within a few days of the on-site observations, all members of the committee met with the entire school staff at a specially convened meeting to present an oral report. The Program Evaluation Supervisor drafted a written report which he circulated to committee members for their additions and modifications. The finalized written report was printed, bound, and presented to the school in multiple copies. The reports generally consisted of the following sections:

1. Composition and expectations of the External Monitoring Committee
2. Documents submitted to the committee by the school
3. The monitoring process
4. Some basic information about the Effective Schools Program in the school
5. Findings and observations of the External Monitoring Committee
6. Conclusions and suggestions for staff consideration
7. Appendices

This process, which was repeated in 1983 and 1984, has proved to be extremely useful and rewarding for the staff. Normally in a change process, each person sees only a small part of the change. Through reading this report, all participants are able to understand the extent of the change and its perceived meaning for the entire school.

For the first year of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette (1981-82), both the Internal and the External Monitoring Committees agreed that many of the observed changes at the school were the outgrowth of seeds planted in the years 1979-81 before the program was formally introduced. Both committees also agreed that the Effective School Program had helped focus and accelerate the change process. In its first report, the External Monitoring Committee found that certain outcomes appeared to be the result of the Effective Schools Program efforts. These seemed to centre around the identified strong leadership, the commitment of the staff, and the consistency both in approach and response. Some of the outcomes recorded were:

1. There is a "positive ethos" within the school where people seem to have a feeling of confidence, enthusiasm, and pride, which was described as a "family approach."
2. The school building provides a "positive physical environment."
3. There exists among the teachers a positive attitude that students are capable. The observers reported a change in the tone of the staffroom, where the previous predominating atmosphere of complaining about students had been supplemented by one of "exploring what assistance can be given a student in need of help."
4. The school is student-centred, and the students are aware of, and appreciative of, this change.
5. The negative stereotype of "the Baz student" is breaking down.
6. Teachers reported that the students' attitudes towards education are changing, in that there are many self-referrals for academic assistance instead of a previous propensity towards choosing the vocational school route.
7. The contact and relationship with parents is improving.
8. Vandalism has been reduced.

The External Monitoring Committee also made ten recommendations for the school's staff to consider for the following year. The report included a reminder to the staff that continuing additional funding from the Process Team Office would not be available, a suggestion that the staff consider publishing articles on the project, and a recommendation that an extensive documentation process could be useful to others interested in the process. The External Monitoring Committee also suggested that the school:

1. Continue to allow the students to sense the change rather than informing them of the bones of the project
2. Move into active committees on all seven factors identified in the research
3. Pay attention to pacing of activities in order to prevent staff burnout, but keep the momentum going.
4. Continue with the variety of meeting structures
5. "Incorporate into planning the development of future leaders," and make specific plans for the orientation of new staff into the process
6. Continue with the external evaluation process, with a variety of outside evaluators

By the end of the 1981-82 school year, the success of this project at Ian Bazalgette was becoming known throughout the school system. At a presentation to the Calgary Board of Education Trustees in the spring of 1982, the principal, Jim Toews, highlighted the following as reasons for the success of the change process at Baz:

1. The framework offered by the Effective Schools Program
2. The confidence the program provided for the school staff
3. The unlimited support and guidance from the system's Process Team
4. The effort of a caring professional staff
5. The support of the Associate Area Superintendent and the East Area Office

CHAPTER 5

Year Two

In many ways Year Two of the Ian Bazalgette Effective Schools Program can be described as the most productive year to-date. Year One proved to the participants that change could bring a more pleasant and productive teaching and instructional life to the classrooms and to the whole school. Those who were prepared to act according to a vision of an improved situation had been given encouragement to experiment. The teaching staff believed that it had finally found a process different from those attempted in the past. Both the Process Team and the Area Office were willing to provide support for whatever direction the staff chose. The teachers well remember their feelings when they realized that support and follow-up were built into the process. One recalled:

The important thing about ESP is that it continued. When this plan was first presented, I thought "Big deal!" If it had been left like most other professional days, nothing would have happened. We weren't given the opportunity to forget. . . . You weren't expected to implement it on your own. There was follow-up that continued for weeks, months, and years. The fact that it operated as a long-term plan is important to its success.

The staff did not need any convincing when the time came to begin Year Two.

During the August Organizational Days for the 1982-83 school year, one entire day was spent reviewing the progress made at Baz during the previous year and planning for the continuation of the Effective Schools Program. As recommended by the 1982 External Monitoring Committee, the principal encouraged the staff to work on all seven factors. He also encouraged staff members to take part in different factor groups for their personal focus in 1982-83. After some initial maneuvering, the staff decided to organize into five factor groups:

1. Firm Leadership and Extended Involvement in Decision Making
2. Appearance and Comfort of the School Environment.
3. Student Participation in the Operation of the School
4. Instructional Emphasis
5. School Organization and Teacher Skills and the Level of Expectations that Teacher Behaviour Represents

The Appearance and Comfort and the Instructional Emphasis committees, with some membership changes, were continuations from the previous year. Two previously independent factor committees, 1) School Organization and Teacher Skills, and 2) Level of Expectations that Teacher Behaviour Represents were amalgamated to form a single committee. The two new factor committees were Student Participation in the Operation of the School and Firm Leadership and Extended Involvement in Decision Making. The Rewards and Praise Committee was disbanded based on the rationale that "the entire staff had now become the committee." One of the major changes in Year Two was the expansion of the program beyond the professional staff to include the support staff, the caretaking staff, students, and parents. All committees immediately began to work on action statements for the upcoming school year.

The principal's own commitment to the Effective Schools Program as a model for school improvement was heightened when he joined three members of the Process Team on a trip to London, England in mid-September 1981. The purpose of this trip was to discuss the validity of the Calgary approach to improving school effectiveness with the authors of the longitudinal study reported in **15,000 Hours....** These researchers gave their enthusiastic support to the Calgary activities. Dr. Peter Mortimore, a member of the original research team, was particularly impressed by the way that the Canadians assertively structured detailed plans to turn research into action.

Reinforcing the previous year's efforts to maintain common expectations and standards, the School Organization Committee used a variety of strategies. The members began the year with a reminder to experienced teachers and new staff members about the common student behaviour expectations established in the previous year. Their real thrust then moved to focus on two major areas, instruction and management. To increase instructional effectiveness the committee sponsored a workshop on reading in the content areas, tested students for preferred learning styles, and shared both individual and class profiles with the staff. They also circulated helpful hints and materials based on current research sent by the Process Team and provided noon-hour video tape sessions from series such as "The Heart of Teaching." To share among all professional staff the various management techniques which had proved successful in different curriculum areas, the committee organized a teacher exchange and began a formal program of peer observation. They also arranged that some professional development time be spent visiting other schools.

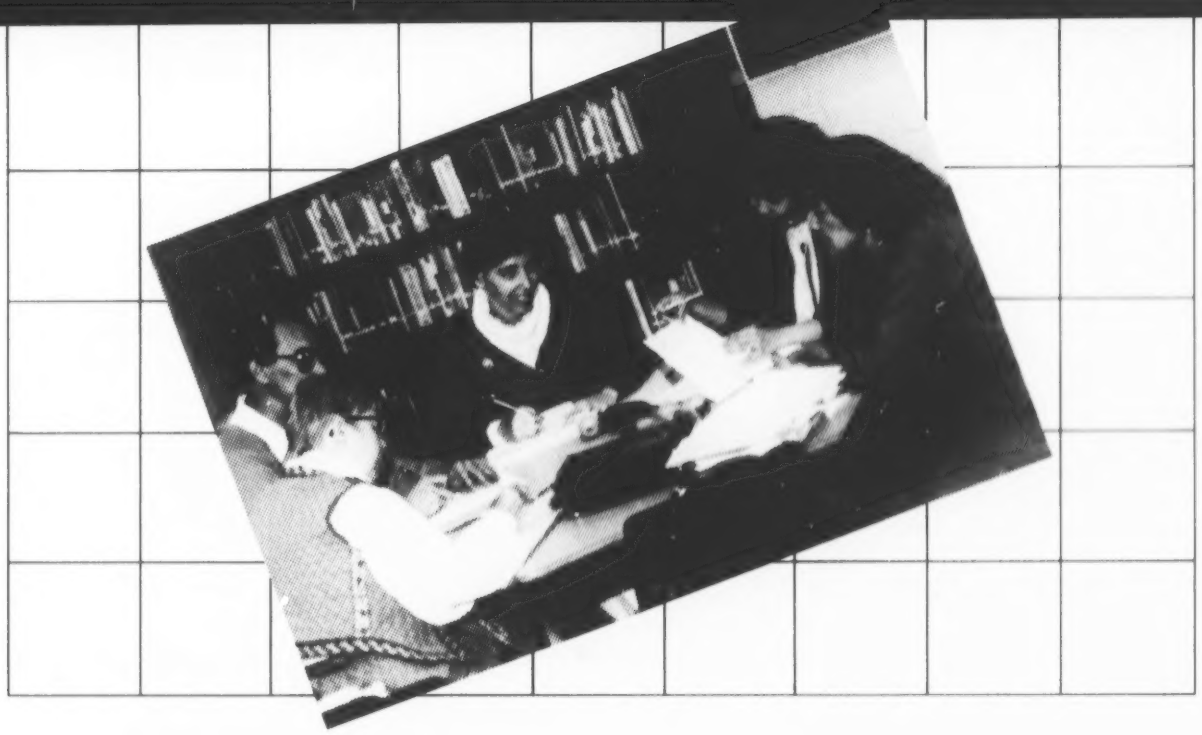
The Appearance and Comfort Committee agreed to "maintain and improve upon the existing physical environment in our school." They increased their already heavy emphasis on student involvement through a homeroom plaque contest, a school coat-of-arms contest, and the initiation of a student-run radio station, CBAZ. In addition, the students continued to decorate the walls with murals and place plants in hallways and classrooms. More bulletin boards were installed to encourage the display of student work throughout the school.

The Instructional Emphasis Committee prepared an updated action manual, promoted instructionally-oriented fieldtrips, and attempted to compile a list of resources available for extending the learning experience outside the classroom.

The new Student Participation Committee quickly began to search for opportunities to expand the involvement of students in the operation of the school. With the assistance of a member of this committee, students wrote a new Student Council Constitution. This committee also arranged to have a Student Council representative attend appropriate portions of staff meetings and to make students full members of some factor committees. Peer teaching, which was introduced as an option for Grade 8 students, was encouraged and successfully practised in many classes.

The Firm Leadership and Extended Involvement in Decision Making Committee began its first year of activity by expanding its membership beyond the professional staff to include a member of the support staff and a parent. Attitudes toward decision-making in the school were studied through the use of two surveys of the staff. The committee facilitated an activity whereby each curriculum group documented and shared its decision-making process. The results of this activity were summarized in a brief which the Faculty Council discussed in depth.

Since leadership and decision-making were areas in which he had a special interest, the principal took an active role as a member of this committee. Following the example of the East Area Superintendent, he offered monthly "Causing Others to Want Your Leadership" seminars to all subject area coordinators. In an effort to expand the decision-making process beyond the school's staff, he initiated what became a successful Parent Advisory Committee. This group immediately became an additional force for change within the school because, as one member later said, "I feel I have some say in the school and how it runs. I feel comfortable in this school." The Parent Advisory Committee suggested that the entire structure of Parent-



Teacher interviews be changed by moving the interviews from individual classrooms into a common area, the gym, and by including students in the interviews. Hence the STP (Student/Teacher/Parent) interview was introduced to Ian Bazalgette. From these interviews and through other increased parent/teacher communication, the staff was able to help parents to understand the child's potential or as one parent explained, "What the child could do." The same parent found an additional advantage in the fact that "the cooperative model at school really rubs off at home with the parents."

As a result of their increased involvement in the school and enthusiastic endorsement of what they found happening there, members of the Parent Advisory Committee wrote a brief supporting their school's approach to education. This brief was sent to Alberta's Minister of Education, David King, and presented by Parent Advisory Committee members to the Calgary Board of Education Trustees at a board meeting in May 1983.

The staff of Ian Bazalgette received an additional boost on March 15, 1983 when Peter Mortimore spent a day at Baz during a visit to Calgary. After examining the activities in which the school had been involved during the previous 18 months, Dr. Mortimore made a presentation to the staff in which he told the staff how impressed he was by their ability to apply the findings of the research and to mobilize the entire school in a concerted school improvement process. He not only confirmed the fact that the school's program was consistent with the original research, but he also suggested that the effective schools activities at Ian Bazalgette had extended beyond the original research.

As in Year One, both the Internal and External Monitoring Committees made year-end evaluations of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette. The Internal Monitoring Committee confirmed that the actions planned by the factor groups had been accomplished. The External Monitoring Committee addressed their annual series of questions on various aspects of the project. An important question centered on the concept of turning research into practice.

The Process Team Specialist reconfirmed Peter Mortimore's contention that the school was remaining true to the spirit of the original theoretical base, in the following summary:

> *According to current educational thought, an Effective School is one which offers both academic excellence and caring and sharing. In the plans and actions of the staff at Ian Bazalgette, we see abundant evidence of both and are thus able to conclude that the practices carried out in the 1982-83 school year are unquestionably congruent with the current educational research upon which this project is based.* **(External Monitoring Committee Report,** *1983, p.6)*

The External Monitoring Committee highlighted factors which they found much in evidence during their on-site observations. Important among these were: the positive ethos, the staff commitment, the strong leadership and staff involvement in decision-making, strong parent-community support, the

positive responses of the students, and the commonly-held feeling that the school was improving. Not only did people feel better about the school, but the teachers also found a change in the students' academic interests. Students often made arrangements for extra help after school. Homework was being completed. The resource teachers received increased requests for classroom assistance from teachers whose programs were expanding and developing. As one Mathematics teacher reported to the External Monitoring Committee:

> *In the past the students were not much concerned about academic achievement. Now they are keen and want to know which of the Math programs they will go into in Grade 10.*

Parents, staff, and students were aware of the improvement in the school. The External Monitoring Committee summed up the attitude of the staff toward the project:

> *The purpose of the research and the project was to provide a process by which a school might identify areas it wants to develop in order to improve its academic achievement. The staff of Ian Bazalgette School has now put into place a self-renewing process. The school has complete ownership of the process which has become an integral part of the operation of the school. It is a part of the school and no longer a project.*

In addition to their observations of the year's activities, both the Internal and External Monitoring Committees made recommendations for the following year. They agreed that the project should continue; each encouraged staff members once again to change factor groups; they recommended that the Rewards and Praise Committee be reactivated; both committees suggested that increased student involvement be a goal for 1983-84. The Internal Monitoring Committee suggested that some data be found for comparing Ian Bazalgette with other Calgary schools "in the areas of test marks, attendance, sports, class size, special areas, and other areas of interest."

The External Monitoring Committee dealt at some length with "public relations." During the 1982-83 school year, the success of the Effective Schools Program had made Ian Bazalgette School a system resource for those interested in change in schools. Many educators, including trustees, superintendents, and entire school staffs, visited the school; school personnel received numerous invitations to make presentations on the Effective Schools Program to other schools. The External Monitoring Committee suggested that the school's staff discuss methods for preventing the burden of these activities from falling "exclusively or too heavily on a few individuals in the school." Its report recommended that the staff attempt to establish a committee which would ensure that Ian Bazalgette be assigned staff who would be able to continue with the process of change and improvement.

CHAPTER 6

Year Three

As had been the practice during the second year of its Effective Schools Program, the staff of Ian Bazalgette began the 1983-84 school year by devoting one of the August Organizational Days to the program. The principal began the session by presenting a position paper amalgamating three educational thrusts affecting Ian Bazalgette. These were the school's efforts through the Effective Schools Program, the East Area School Improvement Model, and the position paper, "Expectations for the Division of Instruction," (1983) a statement of purpose prepared by the Deputy Chief Superintendent of the school system, endorsed by the Board of Trustees, and incorporated into system policy. The principal reminded the staff that past experience had proved that this staff could accomplish any goal which it set for itself. Although the principal agreed that the direction which the staff would take in 1983-84 would be its choice, he challenged them to expand their horizons beyond Ian Bazalgette and to include the goals of the area and the entire system. After discussing the East Area School Improvement Model and Dr. Dickson's paper, the staff concluded that the seven original effective schools factors provided an appropriate umbrella under which the school could accomplish the expectations of the system, the area, and the school. Consequently, for the first time, committees addressing all seven effective schools factors became active in the school. The first task for each committee was to write a statement clarifying the group's purpose.

The reactivated Rewards and Praise Committee declared its purpose "to maintain and expand the use of rewards and praise to enhance the self-concept of students and staff." This committee decided to encourage success in student writing through in-school writing contests, submitting selected student work to local writing contests, sponsoring students at the Calgary Writing Project's Young Writers' Conference, and displaying student writing at a Spring Fair in conjunction with Education Week. They also initiated and publicized a "Student of the Week" award system. Although a buddy support system was already in place for teachers, a second secret buddy system was created by drawing names. The purpose of this was to encourage staff members to provide anonymous "pick-me-ups" both at times of success and stress throughout the school year. Both student and staff birthdays received recognition.

"To strengthen the trend towards increasing the

academic standards at Baz," the Emphasis on Learning Committee began to look at the question of homework. Members of this group instigated a school-wide homework program, which included providing workshops for staff and members of the Parent Advisory Committee. A day book system, which culminated in a weekly reward for the best behaved class, was implemented for all Grade 7 classes. Efforts were made to identify gifted students, provide them with individual counselling, and offer enrichment activities for use in their regular classrooms. Continued stress was placed on efforts to offer instruction that would accommodate all learning styles. Members of this factor group also spearheaded a movement toward greater liaison with elementary feeder schools and the receiving neighbourhood high school.

In their effort "to work to maintain, enhance, and improve the physical environment in our school," the Appearance and Comfort Committee continued to provide and care for plants in all areas of the school. They encouraged the design and painting of additional murals; this included the completion of an enormous, hooked wall-hanging of the school crest which was hung in the library. New home room plaques were created, and picnic tables were installed in the school's courtyard.

The committee, High Level of Expectations as Expressed Through Teacher Behaviours, was formed with the goal "to help colleagues become more aware of the level of expectations that their behaviour represents." Stressing the three-R's (respect, responsibility, rights) concept of common expectations within the school which the whole school supported, this group worked on redefining the consistent expectations within the school. Through the use of surveys and information-sharing, it attempted to maintain communication in the areas of teacher and student expectations.

The goal of the Student Participation Committee was "to continue the expansion of the number of students that are involved in the operation of the school." In its second year of activity, this factor group included in its membership not only six professional staff, but also one support staff and two students as a model to other factor groups whom they encouraged to adopt the same practice. Members of this committee worked to provide opportunities for unsuccessful Student Council candidates to become involved in school activities. In addition to training students to assist in the lunch room, run intramurals, and conduct school awards assemblies, this group expanded the number of students providing assistance in the office at lunch hour.

The School Organization and Teacher Skills Group aimed "to help the staff share strengths and further develop successful teaching skills." They deliberately decided to concern themselves more with the aspect of teacher skills than with school organization. To work towards achieving this end, mini workshops were presented to the staff in the areas of peer observation and clinical supervision. This group was also responsible for one of the Organizational Day activities, the presentation of a classroom management workshop centring on the process of setting initial expectations through student involvement. Their learning styles work from previous years was continued, with stress on teachers' assessing their own learning styles and relating their findings to their perceived teaching style.

"To develop leadership and decision-making skills in our school," the Firm Leadership Committee began a process of developing student leaders. The first step was to provide a "Student Leadership" workshop for interested staff members. As an expansion of his previous year's activity, the principal offered the "Causing Others to Want Your Leadership" seminars to interested staff members. A number of other workshops and activities, involving both professional and support staff, were organized to develop staff decision-making and leadership skills. A staff member later said that most staff members were aware that "leadership was developed and spread to many." This factor committee maintained its strong tie with the Parent Advisory Committee whose representative continued as a member of this factor group.

During its annual external evaluation in the spring of 1984, the External Monitoring Committee observed fewer dramatic changes than they had found during the two previous years. The administrators had made a conscious effort "to take some of the hype out of the ESP program" and to "step back from taking the major leadership role in the promotion of ESP." The External Monitoring Committee found that the Effective Schools Program had become a "way of life" at Ian Bazalgette. It suggested that continuing to relax the formalized approach, which had characterized the Effective Schools Program, was the best plan for the future at Ian Bazalgette. The External Monitoring Committee did observe the familiar factors which had been present in the school during the two previous sessions: a strong positive ethos, a student-centred staff, strong leadership, positive student attitudes toward the school, and parental confidence in the school. In particular, the members of the External Monitoring Committee were impressed by the "excellent" student behaviour and deportment, the "high level of orienta-

tion towards quality performance and achievement," and the commitment of the staff to improvement. The report noted "that the old image of Baz as a tough school is fading in the community."

Both the Internal and External Monitoring Committees again recommended that the Effective Schools Program continue. However, the real emphasis of their suggestions was more divergent than in previous years. The Internal Monitoring Committee and the External Monitoring Committee both allowed for the possibility of change in the factor committee descriptions, should such change be justified by current educational research. The External Monitoring Committee warned against digressing too far from the seven effectiveness factors with the caution "failure to keep these ESP factors continually before you could result in their being overlooked in time." Additional Internal Monitoring Committee recommendations were concerned with efficient record keeping and the orientation of new staff to the Effective Schools Program.

The External Monitoring Committee also repeated the previous year's concern that the school be properly prepared for a time when strong staff members, particularly in administration, left the school for new jobs in the system. They reiterated the suggestion from the 1982-83 report that the school take the leadership in convening a committee, with area and system personnel, to prepare for this eventuality. The External Monitoring Committee again suggested expansion of the group of individuals involved in public relations activities such as introducing visitors (more than 200 in the 1983-84 school year) to Ian Bazalgette and giving workshops to share the Baz experience with other schools and other districts. They cautioned about the level of activity on the part of many staff members stating that "You may find that activity overload results in your not achieving objectives or having to delete activities and priorities." One committee member suggested that they "relax, but don't drop the reins."

CHAPTER 7

Year Four

Perhaps the 1983-84 External Monitoring Committee was sensing that the staff of Ian Bazalgette was on the threshold of a new stage of development as a school. One goal of the Effective Schools Program had been to make this process a "way of life." As this goal was accomplished, the staff members seemed to be losing the sense of excitement upon which they had come to depend. During the 1984-85 school year, many became well aware that they had reached a plateau.

The 1984 school year began with the usual overview of the progress which the school had made through the Effective Schools Program and a reorientation of the staff into the process. For the first time, the entire staff saw the slide show which served as part of the Effective School's presentation made to other schools and school districts. The administrative team summed up the school's commitment to the process and encouraged the staff to begin another year. The staff members chose to move into seven factor committees, but made a move away from the original research when they eliminated High Level of Expectations as Expressed Through Teacher Behaviour and introduced a new committee, Tolerance and Understanding. This committee was formed as an outgrowth of two major considerations - the multicultural nature of the Ian Bazalgette population and the findings of the recent Alberta Government Committee on Tolerance and Understanding.

Relying on the success of previous years, the administration decided to continue with the process of deformalizing the structure of the Effective Schools Program. For example, they called fewer formal meetings of the Internal Monitoring Committee, demanded less accountability in the area of written documentation, and generally relied on the individual factor groups to deliver the quality of growth which had characterized the early years of the Effective Schools Program. This move away from the formalized approach also led to less contact between the school and the Process Team. The involvement of the principal and other staff members in the process of sharing the Baz Effective Schools experience with other schools also seemed to have detracted from the energy which these individuals were able to put into the Effective Schools Program at Baz. Whatever the source of the difficulty, it soon became apparent that the spark had gone from the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette. Staff members expressed to the administrators, and to one another, the belief that some-

thing was different. The sense of rapid growth which they had experienced during the previous three years was no longer there. Some spark was required to create a new impetus for the Effective Schools Program.

During the early fall of 1984, the Program Evaluation Department of the Calgary Board of Education approached the school with a proposal for writing a history of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette. For some time, members of the External Monitoring Committee had been recommending that the Bazalgette experience receive more extensive documentation than was possible in evaluation reports. They feared that the staff, which had pioneered this process, might disperse without leaving a formal record of its work. Once the commitment to writing was made, the staff developed a renewed interest in examining the process - past, present, and future - at Ian Bazalgette.

Built into the project of writing this history was the opportunity for small group discussions between the writers and other staff members. During these sessions the staff members were given the opportunity to express openly their individual perceptions of the Effective Schools Program, - what they felt at the beginning, what they had achieved personally, how they had changed personally and professionally, and what they envisioned for the future.

Concurrent with these small group discussions, the Professional Development Committee and the Faculty Council requested that another group of staff members arrange a retreat day for the entire staff. This committee agreed that the focus of the Professional Day would be another set of three R's, Review, Reflect, and Refocus. This proved to be a day devoted to vigorous discussion of a variety of methods for restructuring the growth process at Ian Bazalgette. Finally, late in the afternoon, the staff agreed to recommit itself to the umbrella of the seven factor committees established in September, 1984:

1. Appearance and Comfort of the School Environment
2. Firm Leadership and Staff Involvement in Decision Making
3. Rewards and Praise
4. Emphasis on Learning
5. Student Participation
6. School Organization and Teacher Skills
7. Tolerance and Understanding

This concensus was reinforced and extended during the small group discussions which gave many staff members the opportunity of detailing their individual opinions. Several additional areas of agreement emerged from an analysis of these sessions. Most staff members agreed that "the school needs a goal" or a "theme" on which to focus during each school year. Perhaps the formal challenges which the principal had issued at the beginning of the previous school years were an important element in the holistic growth of the school. In addition, there appeared to be a general agreement that the movement away from the regular Internal Monitoring Committee meetings detracted from the communication and consistency which had characterized the early years of the program. As one teacher stated, "We are beginning to work more in isolation. We need more meetings."

During their small group sessions, many staff members concurred in the belief that the formalized structure of the early years of the Bazalgette Effective Schools Program is essential to continued growth. One said, "We must replace the formal structure we have been reducing." Another insisted, "We can't let down on anything. We need to get back to the basics of ESP." Another teacher, who had only come to the school in the third year of the program, recognized that "the structure and timelines are really important to get things done." One teacher made an interesting comparison when he suggested, "When the honeymoon is over, the real work begins." At this time in the history of Ian Bazalgette, the majority of the staff members recognize the need to clarify their role in the Effective Schools Program. The entire staff seems to have spent the first few months of the year asking "Where do we go from here?" The 1984-85 year-end report of the Internal Monitoring Committee is expected to incorporate suggestions for future directions of the Effective Schools Program at Ian Bazalgette.

CHAPTER 8

The Results

During the retrospective look at the changes which have occurred since the inception of the Effective Schools Program, the staff was emphatic in agreeing that the school is now completely different from what it had been in 1980. A major change was obvious in the area of student learning. The improvement in academic achievement is difficult to document statistically since no records exist which can be used for comparison. However, there are tangible indicators of change. Homework is assigned and completed more consistently; the quality of student writing is improving; the level of student evaluation techniques has been raised. The office mural which states, "If a child cannot learn the way we teach, then we had better teach the way the child can learn." is being practised in classrooms. Lesson and unit planning are now based on a knowledge of student learning styles and on research into how children learn.

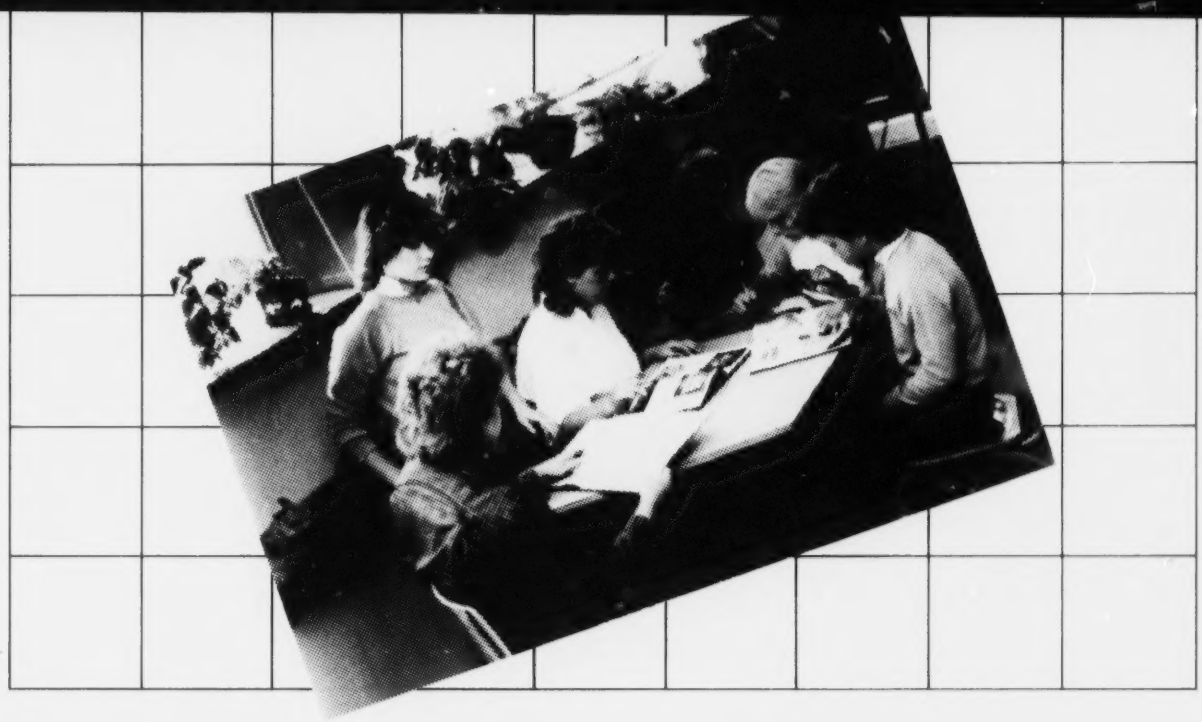
In contrast to previous years when teachers had to spend the majority of their time on survival and solving behavioural difficulties, all teachers commented that more time is now spent on achievement. The teachers have become teachers. One described the change in this way:

I am now able to teach things I couldn't teach in my earlier years here. Students now really want to learn. There is less need now to justify everything we do in class. Students now seem to appreciate why we do specific things.

Consequently there is less student-teacher conflict. With the improved communication and proactive counselling, most problems seem to be resolved before they reach the crisis stage. Administrative records reveal that student disciplinary referrals to the office have dropped from 415 in 1981-82 to 156 in 1983-84. The once common formal suspension is now seldom used. Students are taking a greater responsibility for both their own learning and their own conduct. An example of this comes from the school's vandalism figures for the past six years:

1979	**$ 20,471.46**
1980	**12,410.44**
1981	**12,253.56**
1982	**5,414.88**
1983	**2.377.55**
1984	**1,665.24**

Conflict among students is also less common than it once was. Some of this change is attributed to the fact that the once dysfunctional students now ex-



perience less frustration at Ian Bazalgette. Rather than lowering their expectations, teachers are making use of the Special Services group to develop techniques and strategies whereby dysfunctional students can find success in the classroom.

The earlier situation which had often seen conflict between parents and the school has given way to greater student-teacher-parent cooperation with each participant becoming more aware of the contribution of his or her individual effort to the school's growth. A parent has commented that "We now know that it is our responsibility to be in the school and to be a part of our school." This sentiment is reflected in the number of parents who attend Meet the Teacher Night and Student/Parent/Teacher interviews. In contrast to the few dozen in 1980, more than 400 people attended Meet the Teacher Night in 1984; a total of 900+ interviews took place during the November 1984 sessions as compared to one-quarter of that number in 1980.

When questioned about the "fishbowl" effect created by the success of their Effective Schools Program, the staff was virtually unanimous in agreeing that they enjoy the experience. One teacher spoke for the majority: "It's great! It gives us a chance to show off." The teachers explained that the students also find this to be a positive experience. They believe that the exposure to the public and to other educators gives the students a sense "that ours is a special school." These attitudes show a marked contrast to the staff and student perception of the school described at the beginning of this document.

Staff members are also conscious of the change which the Effective Schools Program has brought to their personal and professional development. To the Ian Bazalgette staff, professional development no longer means the one-shot in-service session which can be entertaining, relaxing, and enjoyable, but is often irrelevant to their individual classrooms. The in-service activities have shifted from depending on outside educational experts to recognizing and harnessing the expertise of the professional staff within the school. Through the sharing of both instructional and management strategies and techniques, the teachers have become committed to ongoing professional growth. When answers to their questions are not available in the school, they look for courses and seminars to find the answers. An example of this is the Ian Bazalgette Listening Project which began in 1982; this proved to be the pilot for the Calgary Listening Project which will be extended to several other Calgary Board of Education elementary and junior high schools during the 1985-86 school year.

Through their involvement in the Effective Schools Program, the staff members of Ian Bazalgette Junior High have taken control of the forces for change and improvement in their school. Seldom has an entire school taken the opportunity to turn educational research into practice in such a holistic fashion. When visitors come to Baz, students share the responsibility for guiding tours and explaining the operation of the Effective Schools Program. Staff members play an important role in acting as spokespersons for their Effective Schools Program at seminars, conferences, and workshops. In these presentations the following are identified as the

strengths of the Ian Bazalgette Effective Schools Program:

1. It is based on solid research
2. It provides a total school focus which builds on strengths.
3. It requires the development of a common philosophical base upon which a school can make decisions and plan professional development.
4. It is completely controlled by the school.
5. It has a built-in self-renewal process that demands action.
6. It enables the school to develop a positive ethos based on consistency and high expectations.
7. It enables a school to develop cross-subject and cross-grade decision-making groups through which more effective learning can occur.

Through a deliberate and formalized concentration on making changes and improvements in each of the seven effective schools factors, Ian Bazalgette has achieved measurable strides in achievement, attendance, and behaviour. Despite the effort and energy required by the process, or perhaps because of it, the school staff remains firmly committed to the Effective Schools Program. To quote the External Monitoring Committee's summary of the first year's progress:

Improvement is the goal
Consistency is the approach
Action is the way
Success is the result.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Coleman, James S. **Equality of Educational Opportunity**. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1966.

Dickson, William R. **Expectations for the Division of Instruction**. Calgary, Alberta: Calgary Board of Education, 1983.

Edmonds, Ronald R. **Characteristics of Schools That Are Instructionally Effective for All Pupils**. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Audiotapes, 1981.

Goodlad, John I. **A Place Called School.** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983.

Goodlad, John I. "The School as Workplace," in **Staff Development: Eighty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education**. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

The Heart of Teaching. Videotape sponsored by the Exxon Corporation. Educational Film Centre, Agency for Instructional Television, 1976.

McLennan, G. Allan, ed. **Ian Bazalgette Junior High School Effective Schools Project: Report of the External Monitoring Committee**. Calgary, Alberta: Calgary Board of Education, Office of the Chief Superintendent, 1982. 1983, and 1984.

Miller, Stephen K. "School Learning Climate Improvement: a Case Study." **Educational Leadership**, Volume 40, December, 1982, pp. 36 - 37.

Rutter, Michael, **et. al. 15,000 Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children**. Boston, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979.

STAFF LIST

1981-1985

The following list includes all Baz staff who worked on the development of the Effective Schools Program during the past four years.

Administrative Team

Principal:		**Vice-Principal:**	
Jim Toews	1979-85	Elizabeth Gouthro	1980-82
Assistant Principal:		Ray McLennan	1982-85
Grayson Schalin	1979-85		

Professional Staff

Joanne Adomeit	1978-85	Tom Dunford	1984-85
Bob Amy	1984-85	Craig Fraser	1981-85
Glenn Armstrong	1981-85	Jean Gooding	1978-85
Diane Murray Barker	1980-85	Elizabeth Ibey	1981-82
Alan Bassett	1979-85	Robert Kerr	1980-85
Anne Belliveau	1972-85	Jim Klein	1980-82
Brian Benoit	1981-85	Reo Kobayashi	1985
Tom Bishop	1983-85	Tiina Koppel	1981-83
Diane Blakelock	1982-85	Barbara Kovatch	1981-85
Judy Clark	1974-85	Carol Krasnodemski	1982-83
David Comb	1982-84	Hal Laser	1978-85
Dennis Dahl	1982-85	Chris Leigh-Smith	1980-85
Gilbert Dahlseide	1983-85	Viki Lenon	1982-83
Ed Dick	1979-82	Emon Lim	1983-85
Ardath Dueck	1982-84	Sandy Mann	1980-85

Professional Staff (con't)

Linda Mason	1981-84	John Ricard	1980-82
Mike McCauley	1981-85	Loretta Scheck	1981-82
Jocelyn Millis	1981-83	David Scott	1981-85
Patricia Moore	1979-85	Victor Sealy	1982-85
Alma Morrill	1976-83	Bev Selby	1979-85
Alex Munro	1984	Doug Simpson	1978-82
Marion Nagel	1983-85	Phil Stobo	1976-85
Joanne Petrowitsch	1981-85	Jane Stollery	1984-85
Rick Petrowitsch	1980-84	Don Torstenson	1984
Peter Pfiffig	1978-85	Laurie Tuck	1981-85
Ken Reimer	1982-83	Trevor Waters	1976-85

Support Staff

Debbie Arthur	1983-85	Bev Henson	1979-85
Chris Beierling	1981-85	Annette Poulin	1984-85
Marjorie Bitz	1981-84	Janice Vance	1985
Shirley Cook	1980-82	Sharon Varty	1984
Donna Giroux	1980-84	Joyce Wilkinson	1982-85
Gaye Gravel	1980-84	Michelle Wittkopf	1981-83
Brenda Hawes	1977-85		

Caretakers

Hank Armbruster	1979-85	David Shankaran	1981-85
Stan Powers	1985	Lil Soderquist	1971-85
Ted Reisinger	1984-85	Gordon Steinke	1981-85

Nurse

Marg Marley	1981-85